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DECEMBER LOCAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATES ANNOUNCED

UNADJUSTED DATA

Madison – Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman today announced that 67 of the State's 72 counties had lower unemployment rates in December 2004 than they had reported in December 2003 illustrating the overall renewed vigor of the State's labor markets.

The State's December 2004 unemployment figure was 4.2 percent compared to 4.9 percent in December 2003. Twenty-one of the State's 72 counties had unemployment rates under 4.0 percent in December. The state's lowest rate was experienced in Dane County at 2.1 percent, with Ozaukee County close behind at 2.3 percent. Waukesha County had the next lowest rate at 3.0 percent.

Of particular note, Racine County had its first unemployment rate under 6.0 percent since December 2000.

Ten counties had unemployment rates 7.0 percent or higher. Oconto County, at 8.4 percent, had the state's highest rate, followed by Adams County at 8.3 percent and Juneau County at 7.9 percent. Northern and rural counties normally have higher unemployment rates in December than November, while the more urban areas of the State normally have lower rates in December.

"December was another positive month for Wisconsin's labor market with 21 counties reporting unemployment rates under 4.0 percent. We continue to anticipate and observe improved labor market conditions in Wisconsin," Secretary Gassman said.

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA (METRO AREAS)

Reflecting the steadily improving economic indicators, all 11 of the State's Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) had lower seasonally adjusted rates in December 2004 than they had experienced in December 2003. The lowest metropolitan area unemployment rate was in the Madison MSA with a 2.4 percent December figure compared to 2.7 percent in December 2003. Three additional MSAs, La Crosse, Eau Claire, and Wausau also had seasonally adjusted rates lower than 4.0 percent for December 2004.

Seven of Wisconsin's 11 metropolitan statistical areas had seasonally adjusted rates below 5.0 percent, and the Milwaukee/Waukesha MSA, Wisconsin's largest MSA, had a seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 5.0 percent. This was the third time since July that the Milwaukee/Waukesha MSA has had a seasonally adjusted rate of 5.0 percent. The rate has not been lower than 5.0 percent since September 2001. Five Wisconsin metropolitan statistical areas (MSA) had lower seasonally adjusted rates in December than November, while four were higher and two were unchanged.

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Employment and Labor Force Household Survey

Unadjusted estimates	Current	Month Ago	Year Ago
Total labor force	3,092,200	3,112,900	3,065,100
Employed	2,963,800	2,982,600	2,915,300
Unemployed	128,300	130,300	149,800
Wis. Unemployment Rate	4.2%	4.2%	4.9%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	5.1%	5.2%	5.4%

Seasonally adjusted	Current	Month Ago	Year Ago
Total labor force	3,113,600	3,128,400	3,085,400
Employed	2,969,800	2,976,700	2,918,200
Unemployed	143,800	151,800	167,200
Wis. Unemployment Rate	4.6%	4.9%	5.4%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	5.4%	5.4%	5.7%

Unemployment % seasonally adjusted	Current Month	Month Ago	Year Ago
Wisconsin	4.6	4.9	5.4
Appleton-Oshkosh	4.0	4.1	4.8
Eau Claire	4.4	4.3	4.9
Green Bay	4.3	4.3	5.0
Janesville-Beloit	6.8	6.3	7.3
Kenosha	5.7	5.7	6.1
La Crosse	3.6	3.5	4.4
Madison	2.4	2.5	2.7
Milwaukee-Waukesha	5.0	5.1	6.2
Racine	6.9	6.8	8.1
Sheboygan	3.7	3.8	4.8
Wausau	3.9	4.0	4.4

Source *Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

WISCONSIN COUNTIES
Unemployment Rates
December 2004
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)

RANK	COUNTY	RATE	LAST RATE	LAST RANK	YR AGO RATE	RANK	COUNTY	RATE	LAST RATE	LAST RANK	YR AGO RATE
2	ADAMS	8.3%	7.3%	3	4.9%	65	MARATHON	3.3%	3.2%	63	3.9%
21	ASHLAND	5.7%	5.1%	22	7.2%	25	MARINETTE	5.6%	5.6%	15	6.8%
28	BARRON	5.4%	4.6%	34	6.7%	5	MARQUETTE	7.5%	6.7%	7	9.8%
6	BAYFIELD	7.3%	6.5%	9	7.6%	4	MENOMINEE	7.5%	8.4%	2	8.3%
57	BROWN	3.7%	3.8%	46	4.3%	33	MILWAUKEE	5.0%	5.7%	14	5.9%
50	BUFFALO	4.0%	3.2%	66	5.6%	56	MONROE	3.8%	3.7%	52	4.7%
19	BURNETT	5.9%	5.0%	25	5.8%	1	OCONTO	8.4%	8.5%	1	8.9%
68	CALUMET	3.1%	3.2%	62	3.4%	15	ONEIDA	6.3%	5.1%	24	6.6%
24	CHIPPEWA	5.7%	4.8%	31	6.3%	55	OUTAGAMIE	3.8%	3.8%	48	4.6%
16	CLARK	6.1%	5.4%	18	6.6%	71	OZAUKEE	2.3%	2.5%	71	3.7%
38	COLUMBIA	4.7%	4.6%	33	5.6%	8	PEPIN	7.1%	5.4%	19	6.5%
46	CRAWFORD	4.2%	3.8%	49	5.0%	43	PIERCE	4.3%	3.9%	45	4.9%
72	DANE	2.1%	2.2%	72	2.4%	29	POLK	5.4%	4.5%	36	6.6%
44	DODGE	4.2%	4.2%	38	5.1%	49	PORTAGE	4.0%	3.7%	53	4.1%
9	DOOR	7.0%	6.1%	11	9.5%	52	PRICE	3.9%	4.0%	42	5.6%
39	DOUGLAS	4.7%	4.2%	40	5.5%	18	RACINE	5.9%	6.0%	12	7.0%
51	DUNN	4.0%	3.2%	67	4.1%	53	RICHLAND	3.9%	3.9%	44	4.1%
61	EAU CLAIRE	3.5%	3.2%	65	3.8%	30	ROCK	5.3%	5.5%	16	5.6%
14	FLORENCE	6.4%	7.1%	5	7.4%	11	RUSK	6.9%	6.0%	13	7.6%
54	FOND DU LAC	3.8%	3.8%	47	4.6%	47	SAUK	4.2%	3.8%	50	4.3%
10	FOREST	7.0%	5.2%	20	6.7%	20	SAWYER	5.8%	4.7%	32	6.6%
59	GRANT	3.6%	3.3%	61	4.5%	36	SHAWANO	4.8%	4.4%	37	5.1%
63	GREEN	3.4%	3.2%	64	4.1%	67	SHEBOYGAN	3.1%	3.5%	57	4.1%
22	GREEN LAKE	5.7%	5.1%	23	6.6%	41	ST. CROIX	4.6%	4.2%	39	6.0%
66	IOWA	3.2%	2.8%	70	3.4%	17	TAYLOR	6.1%	4.6%	35	6.5%
7	IRON	7.1%	6.7%	6	8.0%	37	TREMPEALEAU	4.8%	3.5%	59	6.5%
40	JACKSON	4.7%	3.7%	55	4.7%	48	VERNON	4.1%	3.7%	54	5.2%
45	JEFFERSON	4.2%	4.0%	43	4.3%	13	VILAS	6.8%	6.1%	10	7.2%
3	JUNEAU	7.9%	7.2%	4	8.5%	62	WALWORTH	3.4%	3.3%	60	3.7%
34	KENOSHA	4.9%	4.9%	26	5.2%	26	WASHBURN	5.6%	5.1%	21	7.7%
42	KEWAUNEE	4.4%	4.1%	41	5.8%	60	WASHINGTON	3.5%	3.5%	58	4.4%
69	LA CROSSE	3.1%	3.0%	69	3.8%	70	WAUKESHA	3.0%	3.1%	68	3.9%
58	LAFAYETTE	3.7%	3.7%	51	5.4%	32	WAUPACA	5.1%	4.9%	27	5.5%
12	LANGLADE	6.8%	6.6%	8	8.2%	31	WAUSHARA	5.3%	4.8%	30	5.9%
23	LINCOLN	5.7%	4.9%	28	6.1%	64	WINNEBAGO	3.3%	3.6%	56	4.0%
27	MANITOWOC	5.4%	5.4%	17	7.6%	35	WOOD	4.9%	4.8%	29	5.3%

WISCONSIN CITIES
Unemployment Rates
December 2004
 (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

RANK	CITY	RATE	LAST RATE	LAST RANK	YR AGO RATE
10	APPLETON CITY	4.9%	5.2%	9	5.6%
2	BELOIT CITY	8.1%	8.3%	2	8.4%
27	BROOKFIELD CITY	2.3%	2.8%	26	3.2%
19	EAU CLAIRE CITY	4.0%	3.9%	22	4.5%
12	FOND DU LAC CITY	4.6%	4.9%	11	6.0%
23	FRANKLIN CITY	3.3%	3.6%	23	4.6%
5	GREEN BAY CITY	6.0%	6.3%	5	6.8%
21	GREENFIELD CITY	3.5%	4.0%	18	4.0%
7	JANESVILLE CITY	5.3%	5.9%	7	5.4%
6	KENOSHA CITY	6.0%	6.1%	6	6.3%
20	LA CROSSE CITY	3.8%	4.0%	20	4.4%
28	MADISON CITY	2.1%	2.4%	28	2.3%
3	MANITOWOC CITY	6.9%	6.9%	4	9.3%
25	MENOMONEE FALLS VILLAGE	2.9%	2.9%	25	3.5%
4	MILWAUKEE CITY	6.8%	7.9%	3	8.0%
9	NEENAH CITY	5.0%	5.7%	8	5.9%
26	NEW BERLIN CITY	2.6%	2.8%	27	3.4%
14	OAK CREEK CITY	4.2%	4.8%	13	4.6%
22	OSHKOSH CITY	3.5%	4.0%	19	4.6%
1	RACINE CITY	10.2%	10.6%	1	11.1%
16	SHEBOYGAN CITY	4.1%	4.7%	14	5.1%
11	STEVENS POINT CITY	4.8%	4.9%	12	5.1%
17	SUPERIOR CITY	4.1%	4.0%	21	5.3%
18	WAUKESHA CITY	4.0%	4.4%	16	5.5%
13	WAUSAU CITY	4.5%	4.6%	15	5.0%
24	WAUWATOSA CITY	3.0%	3.4%	24	3.5%
15	WEST ALLIS CITY	4.2%	4.4%	17	5.4%
8	WEST BEND CITY	5.2%	5.1%	10	7.1%

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development
 Bureau of Workforce Information